

What's up next for the conceptual feasibility study?

Telephone Survey - Early October - The telephone survey will be conducted in early October throughout the project corridor counties. Around 400-500 responses are needed to make the survey results statistically significant. Responses will be important to the decision-making process for this project.

Purpose and Need Statement Refinement - Now is the time for the public to comment on the purpose and need statements that we have provided in this newsletter. Comments on the purpose and need statements will need to be submitted to the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet by October 15th. This information will be finalized and incorporated in the final report.

REMAINING PROJECT SCHEDULE	
TASK	DATE
TELEPHONE SURVEY	EARLY OCT.
DRAFT FINAL REPORT	MID. OCT.
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #4	LATE OCT.
FINAL REPORT	NOVEMBER
AREA DEV DISTRICT MEETINGS	LATE NOV. / EARLY DEC.
FINAL NEWSLETTER	DECEMBER

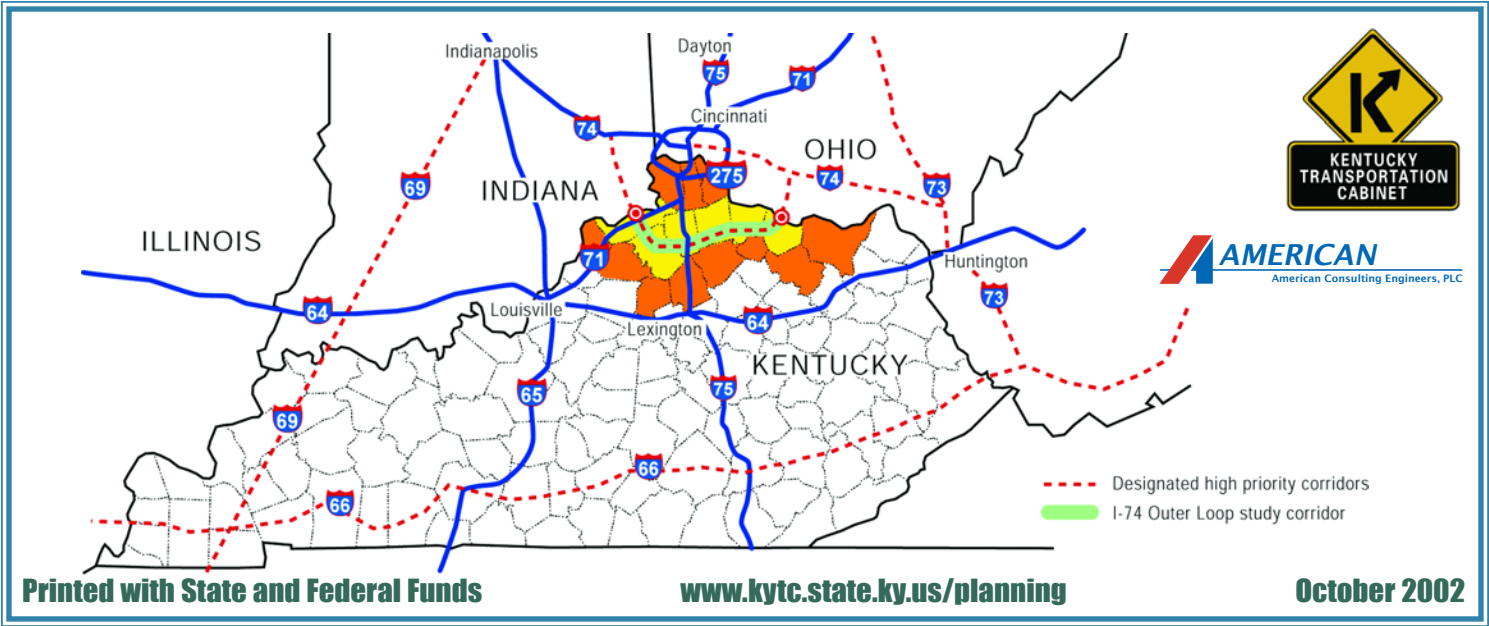
Ms. Annette Coffey, P.E.
Director
Division of Planning
Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
125 Holmes Street
Frankfort, KY 40622

What happens after the Feasibility Study (When is the road going to be built)?

The feasibility study provides officials within the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, the seven identified counties and the Northern Kentucky and the Buffalo Trace Area Development Districts the opportunity to reassess their needs and reallocate their priorities with this project along with all of the other previously identified projects. The counties, the Area Development Districts and KYTC will determine the priority of this project in comparison to the other needs in the area. If it is determined at the state level to be a high priority then consideration for funding in the Six-Year Highway Program is possible. If money is made available for this project (and no funds have been identified at this time) corridor refinement, design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction processes need to be completed in succession. Similar projects to the Northern Kentucky Outer Loop, even with the priority tag on them, have taken a minimum of around 15 years for total completion after the feasibility study. The feasibility study just provides information in order to make informed decisions in the prioritization process.

If you have questions regarding the study, contact:
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The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and American Consulting Engineers - keeping you informed about the projects that impact your community's future.



Conceptual Feasibility Study for Northern Kentucky Outer Loop (I-74)

What is the study?

In 1998, Congress passed the law referred to as the Transportation Efficiency Act of the 21st Century or TEA 21. This law included funding for a conceptual feasibility study for an I-74 Bypass around Cincinnati, Ohio through Northern Kentucky (currently identified as the Northern Kentucky Outer Loop). The purpose of the study was to provide information to assist in determining if the route would generate economic growth and improve the quality of life for those living in the region. This study will contain information that will help assess the merits and identify priority segments of the project.

A preliminary draft report of the conceptual feasibility study is available for review in the County Judge Executive offices in Carroll, Gallatin, Owen, Grant, Pendleton, Bracken, and Mason Counties.

Where is the corridor?

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet held a series of meetings with elected officials and interest groups in the seven corridor counties. These meetings led to a favorable consensus on a corridor 5 to 10 miles wide (shown on the map on page 2), extending from the Markland Dam in Gallatin County to the Ohio River near Maysville in Mason County..

What kind of roads are being evaluated?

- The Conceptual Feasibility Study considered 3 roadway types:
- ▶ An interstate with interchanges every 5 to 8 miles at major north-south routes.
 - ▶ A 4-lane arterial (similar to US 127 South of Frankfort) with partial control of access.

- ▶ A 2-lane arterial (similar to the AA Highway or US 127 from Owenton to Frankfort) with entrances to adjoining properties and public roads.

“Falmouth is only 18 miles from the interstate, but the trip takes 40 minutes.”
Source - Focus Group Member

What is the project status?

All of the base reports have been issued on a variety of topics ranging from economic development to project purpose and need. These reports, which describe various components of the study, can be summarized as:

Existing Conditions Report

Provided background information on all of the counties directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed road. Examples of the types information include: population, employment, per capita income and operational characteristics of the major roadway in the seven corridor counties.

Environmental Overview

Identified any potential obstacles such as endangered species, wetlands, historical sites, and conservation districts that might influence the project alignment. Since the corridor is 5 to 10 miles in width, nothing was found that would be considered a serious obstacle to locating a roadway within the corridor.

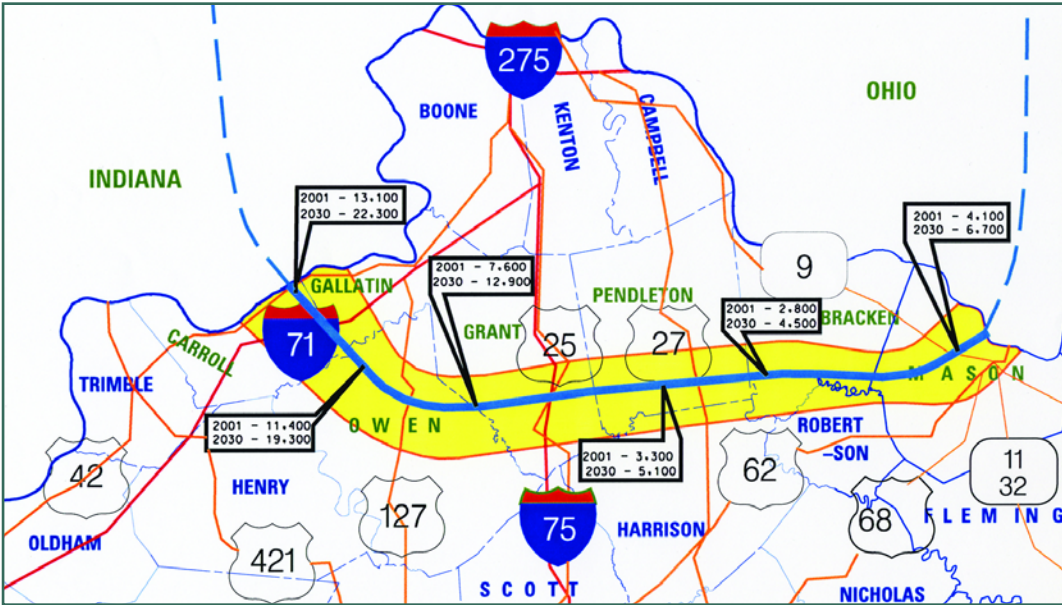
Project Cost Estimates

Developed detailed costs for each of the three roadway types. The table on the following page shows the project costs for the three roadway types:

	COUNTY							PROJECT
	CARROLL	GALLATIN	OWEN	GRANT	PENDLETON	BRACKEN	MASON	
INTERSTATE								
TOTAL	\$247,600,000		\$161,200,000	\$348,400,000	\$ 362,200,000	\$324,900,000	\$263,300,000	\$1,707,600,000
4 LANE ARTERIAL								
TOTAL		\$171,900,000	\$109,600,000	\$232,700,000	\$ 278,100,000	\$238,800,000	\$184,400,000	\$1,215,500,000
2 LANE ARTERIAL								
TOTAL		\$ 17,700,000	\$ 63,700,000	\$142,100,000	\$ 165,400,000	\$142,000,000	\$ 91,100,000	\$ 621,900,000

Traffic Forecasting

Generated traffic projections (both existing and forecasted) for the Northern Kentucky Outer Loop for the three roadway options. The following figure shows the traffic volumes for the free (no toll) interstate option. The traffic forecasts were generated using the Kentucky Statewide Traffic Model. A review of the traffic forecasts indicate a very significant difference in traffic volumes east and west of I-75. This difference has a significant impact on the economic analysis of the corridor.



Benefit Cost Analysis

Evaluated the economic feasibility of transportation investments such as new highway construction. This report addressed the question, are the resource savings from the highway project in terms of reduced travel time, increased safety, and other considerations large enough to compensate for the economic resources that must be invested in the project? The following table shows the benefit cost analysis findings for both the whole road and also the Western Segment (From Kentucky-Indiana Border to Interstate 75):

ENTIRE CORRIDOR									
Option	Baseline (1)	Construction Period		No Build in Adjacent States	Project Costs		Alternative Benefits		Discount Rate
		15 Years	3 Years		15% More	15% Less	15% More	15% Less	
2-lane Arterial	0.300	0.269	0.308	0.281	0.261	0.353	0.345	0.255	0.518
4-lane Arterial	0.219	0.191	0.227	0.184	0.190	0.258	0.252	0.186	0.388
Interstate	0.588	0.536	0.598	0.227	0.512	0.692	0.677	0.500	0.973
WESTERN SEGMENT									
2-lane Arterial	0.494	0.471	0.492	0.409	0.429	0.581	0.568	0.420	0.833
4-lane Arterial	0.255	0.234	0.263	0.163	0.222	0.300	0.294	0.217	0.442
Interstate	1.096	1.027	1.098	0.188	0.953	1.289	1.260	0.931	1.780

(1) The baseline condition assumes a 6 year construction period, a connector route in adjacent states and a discount rate of 7%. The benefit cost analysis assumes connectivity in both Indiana and Ohio. If these routes were not constructed then the benefit cost ratios can be seen under the column, "No Build in Adjacent States."

Economic Development Impact

Presented the impacts of a new highway on the region from both an economic and demographic perspective. The following table shows some of the economic impacts for the corridor:

ENTIRE CORRIDOR					
Design Option	Gross Product	Personal Income	Worker Earnings	Jobs	Population Increase
	(Millions of 1992 \$)	(Millions of 2000 \$)	(Millions of 2000 \$)		
Interstate	\$378.4	\$227.9	\$150.9	2,900	2,400
Arterial	\$243.5	\$156.1	\$102.3	1,600	1,600

Interchange Development

Discussed which interchanges may be more conducive to economic development growth and what types of growth may be expected at these interchanges.

Priority Sections

Discussed the Priority Sections developed for the Northern Kentucky Outer Loop (I-74). The sections from highest to lowest priority are:

- (1) US 127 to I-75

(2) I-71 to US 127

(3) I-75 to US 27
- (4) US 27 to KY 9

(5) Indiana to I-71

(6) KY 9 to Ohio

These priorities were based on traffic, economic development, end road user benefit conditions, logical termini, input from local officials and focus groups, and other considerations.

Purpose and need statements

Identified the most important and primary goals to be incorporated into the purpose and needs statement.

The purpose and need statement for a project study is very important because it identifies the reason the project is taking place, and what is intended to be accomplished by implementing the project. The purpose and need statements should focus on a few factors which have led to the proposal, examples of these factors include safety, capacity, legislative directive, economic development, and roadway deficiencies. Some factors that have been identified for this project that will be incorporated into the purpose and need statement are:

- ▶ To provide a new alternate route, built to current standards, that will accommodate both large trucks and commercial vehicles to mitigate geometric deficiencies of current facilities and to improve safety.
- ▶ To open new economic development and job growth opportunities for this depressed agrarian region (as seen from the benefit/cost analysis) via improved accessibility and reduced travel times.
- ▶ To provide a high level East - West roadway that would facilitate better access to community services such as hospitals, fire departments, police stations, industrial parks, and development opportunities. The new route would

also provide safer and faster east west connectivity between other high-level roadways and communities.

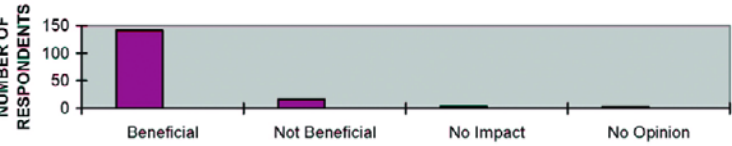
A purpose and need statement defines the conditions against which alternative possible solutions will be measured to efficacy and effectiveness. The purpose and need statement is the legacy that carries on from this phase of the project into possible phases in the future. The purpose and need statement is the measuring stick by which all future roadway development activities will be measured.

Financial Feasibility

This report looks at the financial considerations and their importance to the feasibility of a highway project such as the Northern Kentucky Outer Loop (I-74). Financial Feasibility exists when there are identifiable and sufficient sources of revenue to fund a highway. This report shows that if an interstate highway were built over the entire length of the corridor, an average of 8% of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet's annual construction budget would need to be devoted to this project for the next 20-30 years. It also analyzes the financial feasibility of just constructing the western segment of the corridor.

Public Involvement

This report will be submitted at a later date and will include: meeting minutes, questionnaire results, telephone survey reports, and miscellaneous information regarding public involvement. Thus far almost 200 responses have been submitted to the written questionnaires. The third regional advisory committee meeting was held August 8, 2002 and the second round of Local Focus Group Meetings was held with all the counties on September 10, 12, and 18, 2002.



Final Report

This report is a comprehensive summary of all the project activities.